American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Thursday, September 9, 2021

The following information comes from directly from news sources including Bloomberg Government, Kaiser Health News, and other news sources.

Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE

• President Biden to deliver remarks at 5:00pm on his robust plan to stop the spread of the Delta variant and boost COVID-19 vaccinations

CONGRESS:

• Out of Session

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

• KHN: ‘An Arm And A Leg’: How Charity Care Made It Into The ACA: Charity care is one tiny provision in the giant Affordable Care Act, and it can make a big difference for patients who face huge bills. How did it get into the law? One Republican senator made sure the ACA required nonprofit hospitals to act more like charities — and less like loan sharks — but he still voted against the whole bill. The national requirement to offer charity care emerged from the Obama White House’s failed courtship of GOP Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa. In this episode, we hear how that political tango almost tanked the ACA — and how the battle over the ACA “broke America.” Featured are David Axelrod, a former adviser to President Barack Obama; longtime health policy reporter and KHN chief Washington correspondent Julie Rovner; and a top Grassley aide.

• Politico: Democrats Reopen Old Health Care Wounds With $3.5T Mega-Bill On The Line: Hours after House Democrats launched a major, health care-focused piece of their pitch to turn $3.5 trillion of social spending dreams into law, it ran smack into a political brick wall. The party's growing problem is twofold: On one hand, the White House and Senate are keeping their distance from the House's proposal to divvy up hundreds of billions of dollars between a progressive push for a massive expansion of Medicare benefits and a leadership-driven quest to permanently strengthen Obamacare. On the other, progressives who got a lot of what they wanted in draft legislation the House Ways and Means Committee released Tuesday night are still unhappy with colleagues who would rather use the party’s health care dollars on making expanded subsidies for Affordable Care Act coverage permanent.

• Stat: Sanofi Acquires Kadmon For $1.9 Billion, Adding Transplant Medicine Drug: French drug maker Sanofi said Wednesday that it will acquire Kadmon Pharmaceuticals for $1.9 billion, bolstering its transplant medicines business with a newly approved treatment for graft-versus-host disease. The all-cash transaction sees Kadmon shares worth $9.50 per share, or a 79% premium to Tuesday’s closing price.
• **The Washington Post: Biden To Outline New Strategy To Battle Delta Variant Surge:**
  President Biden will outline a “robust plan to stop the spread of the delta variant and boost covid-19 vaccinations” on Thursday, the White House said. It’s expected to be a significant speech at a turning point for the United States, where hopes that vaccinations would significantly ease the strain on hospitals and allow more social freedoms were dampened by the spread of the highly contagious variant. Biden also plans to call for a global summit to respond to the coronavirus crisis and boost vaccine supply to the developing world that would be held during the United Nations General Assembly meetings later this month.

• **Modern Healthcare: Patients Burdened By Administrative Hassles That Delay Care, Survey Shows:** Navigating the labyrinthine U.S. healthcare system is so challenging for patients that it leads to delayed or foregone medical care, new research shows. Twenty-five percent of insured, working age adults have either postponed or gone without necessary healthcare because of administrative obstacles, according to a study published in the journal Health Services Research Thursday. Nearly three-quarters of patients reported undertaking tasks like scheduling appointments, seeking health information, obtaining prior authorizations and resolving problems with bills and premiums. The researchers used data from the Urban Institute’s March 2019 Health Reform Monitoring Survey.

• **BloombergGovernment: Affordable Drug Group to Run Ads on Drug Pricing Efforts:**
  Patients for Affordable Drugs Now, a group supporting legislation to allow the government to negotiate prices with drugmakers, is launching an ad campaign in the beltway trying to build support for Democrats’ drug pricing plans, Alex Ruoff reports. “Don’t listen to the lies. Don’t listen to the threats. Don’t listen to the lobbyists. Listen to patients,” P4ADNow’s TV ad, slated to run during September, will say, according to a release.